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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KHARTOUM 000128

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DEPARTMENT FOR AF/SPG, S/E WILLIAMSON  
NSC FOR PITTMAN AND HUDSON

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [SU](#) [AU](#) [PGOV](#) [UN](#)  
SUBJECT: FREED DUP LEADER ALI HASSANEIN: DEMOCRATIZATION AT  
THE HEART OF THINGS

REF: A. KHARTOUM 1109

[1](#)B. KHARTOUM 1911

Classified By: CDA Alberto M. Fernandez, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Meeting with CDA Fernandez on January 24 for the first time since his New Year's Eve release from prison, fiery Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) Deputy Secretary-General Ali Mahmoud Hassanein called for a

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democratic process in Sudan in which political parties abandon their differences and attempt to represent the people as a whole. Hassanein also thanked CDA for USG calls to end his six-month detention (reftels). Hassanein claimed his detention is an example of the power of the security apparatus in Sudan, because the NISS demonstrated to President Bashir that he remains in power thanks to its protection. Hassanein eschewed the possibility of political alliances with the NCP, and laid out areas where the international community can provide assistance to the democratic process. End summary.

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NO ALLIANCES WITH THE NCP  
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[1](#)2. (C) Speaking in reference to reported alliances between Sadiq al-Mahdi's Umma Party and the NCP, Hassanein said that no opposition party should form a relationship with such an incorrigible totalitarian regime. The Umma Party had reached agreements with the NCP in 1999 in Djibouti and it had come to nothing, Hassanein charged. "Look at the CPA - agreements with the NCP are worthless," he said. CDA agreed with the futility of forming alliances with the regime. The DUP itself had split over differences regarding government cooperation; Hassanein claimed that the majority of DUP adherents follow his party and not the government-aligned DUP-Hindi.

[1](#)3. (C) Hassanein said that SPLM leadership, including Deng Alor and Yaser Arman, had visited him in prison, and he had urged them not to turn their backs on the north. CDA recalled that he had told Pagan Amun the same thing in December after the SPLM had rejoined the government, cautioning him not to abandon potential northern allies now that the relationship with the NCP had been restored. Regarding elections, Hassanein said he advocates a single alliance of opposition parties which would present a single presidential candidate in upcoming elections, but said that such an alliance faced three obstacles: the government was also approaching opposition parties on its own, the NCP had vast financial resources at its disposal, and the security organs had the power to disperse any public gatherings. "The competition will not be fair," he said.

¶4. (C) Democratic transformation in Sudan would require not only elections and changes in laws, but also changes in the people who occupy offices in the judiciary, civil service and other government institutions, Hassanein said. The Ministry of Justice controls all aspects of the judicial process, he said, and the judiciary should be separated into separate branches -- one for investigations and arrests and another for trials and adjudication. The NCP's popular base lies solely with those currently in power, he said. CDA noted that the NCP no longer has any political platform after generally abandoning its call for political Islam. The NCP has committed crimes all over the country, Hassanein continued, and is "willing to kill anyone." He said that some of his co-detainees from southern Kordofan maintain that crimes committed in that region during the North-South fighting surpassed even those committed in Darfur.

¶5. (C) CDA pointed out that Sudan's annual budget has increased from USD 2 billion to USD 12 billion in the past five years; "Where's the money?" he asked. No matter how much money the NCP has, Hassanein said, it would never use it to support the populace of Sudan. Government institutions have to be rebuilt, but there is no one to do this. There is no national unity in Sudan, Hassanein claimed, and Darfur will be lost if the current government remains in power. CDA concurred, noting that even former janjaweed in Darfur are turning against the regime. Hassanein advocated creating a federalist system loosely incorporating the seven main regions of the country, with seven vice-presidencies of which the South would have the first. "We would guarantee every word of the CPA as far as the South is concerned," he said, but some northern-focused provisions would have to be

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changed.

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SUPPORT NEEDED FOR ELECTIONS  
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¶6. (C) Hassanein outlined three main areas in which the international community could provide assistance: first, discouraging alliances with the NCP; second, pressing for the change of people holding positions in government institutions; and third, providing support for the elections -- if not financially, then through transport, media and training. Companies that traditionally supported DUP and Umma have been destroyed by the regime. The NCP owns 165 companies and all revenues go to the party, he said. Hassanein also highlighted a dangerous clause in the proposed new election law that would forbid parties from accepting contributions from foreign sources. CDA noted that the international community is focused on Darfur and the CPA to the detriment of potentially more important issues like elections. Hassanein agreed and warned that initiatives such as the Sirte talks would fail, and that the government would never cooperate with the ICC. He claimed he himself had once heard the president broadcast an ominous message on Omdurman Radio: "We don't want any POWs, or wounded, in Darfur."

¶7. (C) Comment: An opposition alliance requires extensive support in order to have even a fighting chance in any elections, and the proposed electoral law clause banning this is worrying. Absent a grand alliance of opposition groups brokered by the SPLM or real assistance from the international community, the NCP may have a relatively easy chance to dominate elections given its stranglehold on money, media and the intelligence apparatus. It is a monumental challenge to maintain appropriate attention to the elections with the issues of Darfur and the CPA constantly looming, but absolutely vital to keeping the democratic transformation of

Sudan on track. It is unclear how much support the DUP carries within opposition ranks, and its autocratic leader and spiritual head, Mohammad Osman al-Mirghani, remains in exile in Cairo. End comment.

FERNANDEZ